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NPIC/TSSG/DED-1637-69
2 June 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR : Chief, Technical Services & Support Group *swc*
SUBJECT : Analysis of the Probability of Retaining the High
Precision Stereo Comparator [redacted]

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1. Per your request the Development & Engineering Division has performed a cursory analysis to determine the feasibility of leaving the comparator [redacted] for operation and utilization. Initial investigation would indicate that this would not be a feasible approach because of the prohibitive costs and complications involved.

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2. These costs and complications lay in the following areas:

a. Security - The [redacted] area is unacceptable for handling [redacted] system material. The whole comparator area would have to be made a [redacted] vault with full-time security personnel assigned.

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b. Due to the specialized nature of the computer programs involved, the instrument has to operate on-line to NPIC's UNIVAC 494 computers. We would have the continuing expense of the data link and because of the nature of the information it would have to be encoded and decoded at both ends.

c. Personnel - It would require one or two people assigned to the [redacted] location on a full-time basis. One operator and a back-up for emergencies.

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d. Site Preparation - The current location of the comparator is unacceptable for operational usage. It would require an investment [redacted] to bring that site up to our required clean room standards. To date [redacted] has already been allocated to GSA for preparations [redacted] of course, some of this would be recoverable.

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e. All of the film to be measured would have to be shipped [redacted] Because of the classified nature of this material, shipping costs and courier expenses could become prohibitive.

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Declass Review by NIMA/DOD

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Excluded from automatic
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declassification

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f. Original Negative - The comparator was designed to use the original negative where the sophistication of the measurement requirement makes it necessary. The Original Negative is needed full time at NPIC for reproduction purposes and there is a distinct risk in transporting the unique copy back and forth across the country.

3. There are some advantages to the proposal in that the comparator would be maintained in an area in close proximity to competent maintenance personnel. However, maintenance cost would not be significantly reduced except for savings in transportation and per diem. As a consequence, it might be more feasible to maintain a [redacted] representative in Washington

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[redacted] The risks of shipping the comparator [redacted] have been somewhat exaggerated; since, precise laboratory equipment, of equal degree of complexity, is often shipped throughout the country by Air Van. The crucial portion of the comparator is the Optical Bridge and this has to be shipped [redacted] and there would be no more risk in shipping it [redacted] to Washington than there is inherent in the [redacted] trip. Barring a wreck or a crash, the possibility of significant damage during shipment is low.

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4. It is recommended that the comparator be installed [redacted] as originally anticipated and, if maintenance becomes a problem, that we provide a full time maintenance man at NPIC [redacted]

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[redacted] This should prove significantly less expensive in the long run.

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